

**Board of Veterans Services
Meeting Minutes
July 24, 2013**

DRAFT

A meeting of the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) was held on Wednesday, July 24, 2013 at the Virginia War Memorial, 621 S. Belvidere, Richmond.

Members Present

- Richard Anderson
- L. Max Beyer
- William Haneke
- Thad Jones
- Donald Kaiserman
- Kate Kohler
- Sandra Love
- William Nicholas
- Toddy Puller
- Christopher Stolle
- Jack Hilgers, representing the Veterans Services Foundation (VSF)
- Chip Moran, representing the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC)
- Paul Galanti, Commissioner of Veterans Services

Members Absent

- John Anderson
- Mamye BaCote
- Don Lecky
- Bryce Reeves
- Al Sample

Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present

- Steven Jack, Office of the Attorney General
- Tina Parlett-Calhoun, Department of Veterans Services (DVS)
- Steven Combs, DVS
- Danielle Weaver, DVS
- Cathy Wilson, DVS
- Carol Rauschberg, Department of Human Resource Management
- Carrie Ann Alford, Legislative Assistant to Senator Puller
- Kasey Nabal, Legislative Assistant to Senator Reeves

Others Present

- Gretchen Graves, Virginia Art Technology Therapy Association

Materials Distributed as part of the Agenda Packet

- Agenda
- Presentations (Agenda Item III)
 - Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC) 2013-2014 Initiatives (copy of PPT slides)
- Committee Reports (Agenda Item IV)
 - Benefits Committee Report
 - Care Centers Committee Report
 - Cemeteries Committee Report
- JLC, VSF, and DVS Reports (Agenda Item V)
 - Joint Leadership Council Report
 - Veterans Services Foundation Report
 - Department of Veterans Services Report
- Prepare for Next Meeting (Agenda Item VIII)
 - BVS 2013 Action Plan

Call to Order

Chairman Thad Jones called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

Mr. Don Kaiserman led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The roll was called and with 11 of 18 members present a quorum was determined. Delegate Richard Anderson and Senator Toddy Puller arrived a few minutes later, bringing the number of members present to 13, including Mr. Chip Moran as the JLC representative and Mr. Jack Hilgers as the VSF representative.

Approval of Agenda

Delegate Christopher Stolle made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. William Haneke to approve the agenda as submitted. The motion carried unanimously. The agenda is included as *Attachment 1*.

Chairman Jones asked Mr. Steven Combs to introduce the DVS staff and the guests present. Their names and organizations are recorded above.

Approval of May 8, 2013 minutes

Chairman Jones noted that the May 8, 2013 minutes had been distributed electronically and asked if there were any corrections. There were none, and the minutes of the May 8 meeting were approved as presented by unanimous consent.

Presentations

Joint Leadership of Veterans Service Organizations 2014 Initiatives

Mr. Chip Moran, Vice Chairman of the JLC, delivered a presentation on the JLC's 2014 Initiatives. He reported that at its July 17 meeting, the JLC considered 11 initiatives proposed by the veteran services organizations represented on the JLC. Seven initiatives were adopted as JLC 2014 initiatives. Mr. Moran reviewed the seven JLC 2014 initiatives:

- JLC 2014-01 Hiring and Retention of Benefit Services Agents
- JLC 2014-02 Educating Employers on Value of Hiring Veterans
- JLC 2014-03 Virginia Wounded Warrior Program
- JLC 2014-04 Electronic Return of Absentee Ballots by Overseas Uniformed' Military Voters
- JLC 2014-05 Implementing the Virginia Homeless Veterans Program
- JLC 2014-06 Update 2010 Virginia Tech Study
- JLC 2014-07 Real Property Tax Exemption for Spouses of Military Killed in Action

Mr. Don Kaiserman added that JLC Initiative 2014-07 was not a JLC initiative last year but that it was passed unanimously by the 2013 General Assembly. He explained that the JLC has adopted the issue as one of its 2014 Initiatives in order to help it move forward in the 2014 General Assembly. Mr. Steven Combs explained that Delegate David Ramadan was the patron of the resolution in the 2013 General Assembly.

Committee Reports

Chairman Jones asked if there were any objections to moving Agenda Item IVc (Cemeteries Committee Report) before Agenda Item IVa (Benefits Committee Report). There were no objections.

Cemeteries Committee

Ms. Sandra Love, Chairman of the Cemeteries Committee, stated that the committee met on May 23. She then reviewed the committee report (*Attachment 2*).

Ms. Love stated that the Cemeteries Committee recommends that DVS review Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 and 2016 staffing requirements and submit a request for additional positions through the budget process. Ms. Love said that the committee also recommends that the Board adopt the Cemeteries Committee's recommendation as part of its Executive Order 29 (EO29) recommendations to the Governor.

Chairman Jones thanked Ms. Love for her report.

Benefits Committee

Ms. Kate Kohler, Chairman of the Benefits Committee, thanked the Board and staff for their support. She reviewed the Benefit Committee Report (*Attachment 3*), stating that the committee reviewed three issues at its June 26 meeting. Ms. Kohler noted that Mr. Lee Andes, Assistant

Director for Financial Aid at the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), attended the meeting and provided valuable input. The three issues reviewed at the Benefits Committee meeting were:

1. DVS Benefits Sections section and staffing.
2. DVS and state training requirements, and whether DVS Benefit Field Offices should be closed on a regular basis to meet these requirements.
3. A limited change to the residency requirements to qualify for eligibility for benefits under the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP).

Ms. Kohler said that the Benefits Committee recommends that the Board adopt Benefits Committee Items 1 and 3 as part of its EO29 recommendations to the Governor. Ms. Kohler said that the Benefits Committee recommends no action by the full Board on Benefit Committee Item 2 at this time.

Chairman Jones thanked Ms. Kohler for her report

Care Center Committee

Mr. Don Lecky, Chairman of the Care Centers Committee, was unable to attend the meeting. Chairman Jones noted that the Care Centers Committee report was included in the agenda packet (*Attachment 4*).

JLC, VSF, and DVS Reports

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations

Mr. Moran, JLC Vice Chairman, reviewed the JLC report to the Board (*Attachment 5*). He stated that the JLC met on Wednesday, July 17 and noted that, in addition to adopting the JLC 2014 Initiatives, the JLC held elections and that Mr. Kaiserman and Mr. Moran will continue another year in their respective roles as Chairman and Vice Chairman. He said that the next JLC meeting is scheduled for October 16 at the American Legion Building.

Chairman Jones thanked Mr. Moran for his report.

Veteran Services Foundation

Mr. Jack Hilgers delivered the VSF report to the BVS (*Attachment 6*). He stated that Mr. Rich Schollmann, Chairman of the VSF, was unable to attend today's meeting. The next VSF meeting is Wednesday, August 7.

Chairman Jones thanked Mr. Hilgers for his report.

Department of Veterans Services

Commissioner Galanti delivered the DVS report to the BVS (*Attachment 7*).

Chairman Jones thanked Commissioner Galanti for his report.

New Business

Review, discuss, and approve BVS 2013-14 EO29 recommendations

Chairman Jones briefly reviewed the three initiatives brought before the Board by the committees for consideration as BVS 2014 Initiatives and EO29 recommendations:

1. State Veterans Cemeteries FY15/16 staffing requirements
2. DVS Benefits Services Section staffing
3. VMSDEP residency requirement change

Chairman Jones made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Haneke, to accept the Cemeteries Committee's recommendations regarding State Veterans Cemeteries FY15/16 staffing requirements as a BVS 2014 Initiative and EO29 recommendation. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Jones made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Haneke to accept the Benefit Committee's recommendations regarding DVS Benefits Services Section staffing as a BVS 2014 Initiative and EO29 recommendation. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Jones made a **motion, seconded** by Senator Puller, to accept the Benefit Committee's recommendations regarding VMSDEP residency requirements as a BVS 2014 Initiative and EO29 recommendation. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Jones asked the Board to prioritize the adopted initiatives. Mr. L. Max Beyer made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Kaiserman, that the priority be:

- 1) Cemetery staffing
- 2) Benefits staffing
- 3) VMSDEP residency requirements

Mr. William Nicholas made a **substitute motion, seconded** by Mr. Kaiserman, that the priority be:

- 1) Benefits staffing
- 2) Cemetery staffing
- 3) VMSDEP residency requirements

The substitute motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Kaiserman made a **motion, seconded** by Senator Puller, that the Compact with Virginia's Veterans be a BVS 2014 initiative.

Chairman Jones pointed out that the annual review and update of the Compact with Virginia's Veterans is already part of the DVS Annual Report, and that the Board would review and ratify the 2013 update at its November meeting. He noted that the initiatives adopted by the BVS and JLC will be part of the 2013 update.

After discussion by the Board, Mr. Kaiserman thanked Chairman Jones for his explanation and withdrew his motion.

Mr. Kaiserman recommended that the BVS join the JLC at its annual “Conference at the General Assembly” as a furtherance of the partnership between the two boards. He noted that the next conference is tentatively scheduled for January 9, 2014. There was general consensus regarding Mr. Kaiserman’s recommendation.

Review and adopt JLC 2014 EO29 recommendations

Mr. Moran made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Haneke, that the Board adopt and support the JLC’s 2014 initiatives. The motion carried unanimously.

Other new business and open discussion

Chairman Jones stated that the BVS is still waiting on some Board appointment or reappointment decisions to be made. He added that all JLC appointments or reappointments for 2012 and 2013 have been made.

Public Comment

None was presented.

Prepare for Next Meeting

Chairman Jones asked that the BVS members prepare for the next Board meeting by reviewing the BVS 2013 Action Plan (Attachment 8).

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

ATTACHMENT 1
Board of Veterans Services
Virginia War Memorial
621 S. Belvidere
Richmond
July 24, 2013
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

AGENDA

- I. Opening, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call and Quorum Determination, Approval of Agenda, and Introduction of DVS Staff and Guests – *Thad Jones, BVS Chairman* (10:00 – 10:05)
- II. Approval of May 8, 2013 Meeting Minutes – *Thad Jones, BVS Chairman* (10:05 – 10:10)
- III. Presentations (10:10 – 10:45)
 - a. Joint Leadership of Veterans Service Organizations 2013-14 Initiatives – *Chip Moran, JLC Vice Chairman*
- IV. Committee Reports (10:45 – 11:05)
 - a. Benefits – *Kate Kohler, Chair*
 - b. Care Centers – *Don Lecky, Chairman*
 - c. Cemeteries – *Sandra Love, Chair*
- V. JLC, VSF, and DVS Reports (11:05 – 11:20)
 - a. Joint Leadership Council – *Chip Moran, JLC Vice Chairman* (5 minutes)
 - b. Veterans Services Foundation – *Rich Schollmann, VSF Chairman* (5 minutes)
 - c. Department of Veterans Services – *Paul Galanti, Commissioner* (5 minutes)
- VI. New Business (11:20 – 11:50)
 - a. Review, discuss, and approve BVS 2013-14 EO29 recommendations (15 minutes)
 - b. Review and adopt JLC 2013-14 EO29 recommendations (5 minutes)
 - c. Other new business and open discussion (10 minutes)
- VII. Public comment (11:50 – 11:55)
- VIII. Prepare for Next Meeting – *Thad Jones, Chairman* (11:55 – 12:00)
- IX. Adjourn (12:00)

Lunch to follow

ATTACHMENT 2

CEMETERIES COMMITTEE REPORT

July 24, 2013

The Board of Veterans Services (BVS) Cemeteries Committee met on May 23, 2013. At the meeting, the Committee:

- Received a detailed presentation on the state veteran's cemetery study titled *Commemorating Military Service and Sacrifice in Virginia: An Analysis of Veteran Memorial Needs*. The study was prepared by Dr. Terance J. Rephann, Ph.D. of the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia. This is an update of the study conducted in 2008. Key findings of the study include:
 - The Commonwealth should conform with current federal policy and base cemetery planning on a 75-mile service standard;
 - A future state veteran's cemetery located in Amherst County would best position Virginia for the eventual closure of Culpeper National Cemetery.
- Reviewed State Veterans Cemeteries Maintenance Reserve, Equipment Replacement, and Planning/Improvement plans for Fiscal Years 2014 – 2025. Mr. Dan Kemano, Cemeteries Director, provided in-depth information on the requirements for the three cemeteries.
- Reviewed the cemeteries budget and expenditures for FY 2013. The committee requested that DVS provide detailed financial information regarding operating, maintenance, equipment, and other expenses in Fiscal Year 2014, in order that the committee may more fully evaluate planned expenditures and make appropriate recommendations to the Board. The committee will meet in August or September to evaluate this information. The committee will report the results to the full Board at the November meeting.

Based on the expected growth in the number of burials in Fiscal Years 2015 and 2016, and on the increased grounds maintenance requirements incurred by having more developed gravesites, cemetery staffing levels will have to be monitored closely to ensure that DVS has the staffing levels necessary to meet operational requirements. An increase in staffing levels may be required.

The Committee recommends that DVS review FY15/16 staffing requirements and submit a budget request as required. The committee recommends that the Board adopt this recommendation as part of its Executive Order 29 (EO29) recommendations to the Governor and DVS.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra D. Love
Chair

ATTACHMENT 3

BENEFITS COMMITTEE REPORT

July 24, 2013

The Board of Veterans Services (BVS) Benefits Committee met on June 26, 2013. At the meeting, the Committee:

- Reviewed and discussed numerous matters related to the DVS Benefits Services section and its staffing.

It is the consensus of the committee that the Department of Veterans Services (DVS) should create a staff development plan to serve as an effective management tool to recruit, hire, train, and, especially, to retain Benefits Section staff. It was further agreed that, based on this plan, DVS should identify the necessary funding to implement the plan in Fiscal Years 2015 and 2016 and submit a supporting budget request.

The committee recommends that the Board adopt this as Executive Order 29 (EO29) recommendation to the Governor and DVS as part of the legislative and budget development process for the 2014 General Assembly.

- Reviewed and discussed department and state training requirements, and whether DVS Benefit Field Offices should be closed on a regular basis (one day a month or ½ day per month, for example) in order to complete department, state, and federal training requirements.

It was the consensus of the committee, that, while training was essential to serving Virginia's veterans, it was equally important that DVS Benefit Field Offices be open the maximum amount of time that current staffing resources permit, in order to best serve veterans seeking assistance.

The committee will continue to follow this important matter, but recommends no action by the full Board at this time.

- Reviewed and discussed numerous matters related to the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP).

Discussion focused on eligibility for the VMSDEP for the survivors and dependents of recently separated or retired military service members who do not meet the residency requirements for the VMSDEP but who meet all other requirements. The issue resolved around those veterans who, when they were on active duty, may not have been bona fide domiciliaries of the Commonwealth of Virginia for tax purposes, but who had a long-term physical presence in the Commonwealth because they were assigned to a duty station in Virginia. These new veterans have remained in Virginia after leaving active duty, and have or will take the steps required to establish domicile.

It was the consensus of the committee that this small group of new veterans had

demonstrated their commitment to the Commonwealth by their long-term physical presence in the Commonwealth and by their remaining in the Commonwealth after separation from the military. It was the consensus of the committee that a very limited change should be made to the VMSDEP residency requirements, as stated in the Code of Virginia, to expand eligibility to the eligible survivors and dependents of this small number of veterans.

The committee recommends that the Board adopt this as Executive Order 29 (EO29) recommendation to the Governor and DVS as part of the legislative and budget development process for the 2014 General Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Kohler
Chair

ATTACHMENT 4

CARE CENTERS COMMITTEE REPORT

July 24, 2013

The Board of Veterans Services (BVS) Care Centers Committee has not met since the May 8 Board meeting. A committee meeting will be scheduled prior to the November 16 Board meeting as required.

The committee does not have any matters for the Board to consider as potential Executive Order 29 (EO29) recommendations to the Governor and Department of Veterans Services.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Lecky
Chair

ATTACHMENT 5

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations Report to Board of Veterans Services July 24, 2013

The Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) met on May 22 and July 17, 2013. At these meetings, the JLC:

- Received reports from the Board of Veterans Services, the Veterans Services Foundation, the JLC representative to the Virginia Military Advisory Council (VMAC), and the Department of Veterans Services.
- Received presentations by:
 - Mr. John Cogbill, Chairman, Virginia War Memorial Educational Foundation, on the planned expansion of the Virginia War Memorial and donation opportunities to support the Memorial;
 - Ms. Katie Murphy, Manager of Strategic Initiatives, Northern Virginia Technology Council (NVTC), on the NVTC's new veterans employment initiative.
- Reviewed and discussed 11 initiatives proposed by the veterans service organizations represented on the JLC. Of the 11 proposed initiatives:
 - Seven were adopted as JLC 2013-2014 initiatives;
 - One was withdrawn from consideration;
 - One was tabled;
 - One was postponed until the October 16 meeting;
 - One was passed to DVS for further research and action as necessary.
- Elected JLC Chairman Don Kaiserman and JLC Vice Chairman Thomas Moran to a second term.
- Welcomed the Virginia Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Association at the 24th veterans service organization represented on the JLC.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with the BVS in support of Virginia's veterans in 2013, and ask that the Board vote to adopt and support the JLC's 2013-2014 initiatives. The next JLC meeting will be held October 16.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Moran
Vice Chairman

ATTACHMENT 6

VETERANS SERVICES FOUNDATION REPORT TO Board of Veterans Services (BVS) July 24, 2013

The Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Board of Trustees has not held any meetings since the last BVS meeting. The VSF Report to the BVS on May 8 remains valid.

The end of FY13 VSF draft Financial Report is available. In FY13, the Foundation received \$479,125.40 in donations, of which \$379,241.06 was for the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program. This is one third more than the Foundation received in FY12 and double the amount received for VWWP. Additionally, over \$20,000 of the total received was for the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program. As always, the Foundation extends its sincere congratulations to the outstanding outreach of all DVS activities and affiliates to realize this significant fundraising level. It could not have been accomplished without the dedication of all DVS personnel and their supporters.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for August 7, 2013 at the American Legion Headquarters on Commonwealth Avenue. There will be Development and Finance Committee meetings prior to the Board meeting. Items for the next meeting may include: (1) approval of the Final Quarter FY13 Financial Statement; (2) approval of the review and updates of VSF-DVS Joint Policies #7, 8, and 9, and a possible update to #5; (3) consider a new policy on charitable bequests/planned giving; (4) review VSF FY13 fundraising program and projections for FY14; (5) appointment of committee chairs for FY14; and (6) consideration of budget adjustments for FY14, including requests for funding the V3 Program.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard A. Schollmann
VSF Chairman

ATTACHMENT 7



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Veterans Services

Paul E. Galanti
Commissioner

Telephone: (804) 786-0286
Fax: (804) 786-0302

Memorandum for: Chairman Thad Jones
Members, Board of Veterans Services

From: Paul E. Galanti, Commissioner

Date: July 24, 2013

Subject: Department of Veterans Services report

As we begin state Fiscal Year (FY) 2014, I am more pleased than ever about all that the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) and the Department of Veterans Services (DVS) has accomplished together to serve Virginia's veterans. The wisdom, guidance, and support of the BVS members has been and will continue to be critical to the successful delivery of veterans programs in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The BVS has earned my sincere trust and admiration, and I look forward to reporting to you at future meetings on all that the Commonwealth is doing to serve the more than 837,000 Virginians who have worn the uniform of our country. In the next year, we expect to launch new or expanded services to our veterans, including:

- Open a new Benefits Field Office in Henrico County;
- Break ground on the 40-bed addition to the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center in Richmond;
- Complete the projects to add more than 4,000 pre-installed outer burial containers at the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery (Suffolk) and more than 1,600 at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia);
- Break ground on the expansion of the Virginia War Memorial in Richmond;
- Continue the success, begun in FY 2013, of creating employment opportunities for Virginia veterans through the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program;
- Develop and deploy a new application and approval system for the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependent Education Program;
- Celebrate the five-year anniversary of the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program, including the expanded focus on housing development and homeless veterans issues.

ATTACHMENT 8

Board of Veterans Services 2013 Action Plan – “Push Forward!”

January 7 meeting

- Discuss 2013 General Assembly session, including Governor McDonnell’s proposed budget, BVS and JLC EO29 recommendations, and other veterans legislation;
- Review Executive Order 29 (EO29) *Serving Virginia’s Veterans* and the role of the BVS.

January – May: “*Research and development*”

- Board members visit DVS facilities, meet with DVS staff members and veterans;
- Committees hold meetings to review/discuss potential EO29 proposals;
- Committees research initial EO29 proposals and prepare background papers for presentation at May 8 meeting;
- Orientation for new Board members.

May 8 meeting

- Review 2013 General Assembly Session: budget and legislation;
- Review and discuss initial EO29 proposals;
- DVS Operations Briefings – committee chairs and DVS directors.

May – July: “*Putting Meat on the Bones*”

- Board members visit DVS facilities, meet with DVS staff members and veterans;
- Committees hold meetings to review/discuss potential EO29 proposals;
- Committees continue research on EO29 proposals and prepare background papers for presentation at July 24 meeting;
- Orientation for new Board members.

July 24 meeting

- Review, discuss, and approve BVS 2013-14 EO29 recommendations;
- Review, discuss, and adopt JLC 2013-14 EO29 recommendations.

NLT August 15

- Submit BVS 2013-14 EO29 recommendations to DVS for transmission to Governor.

November 13 meeting

- Adopt 2014 Meeting Schedule;
- Adopt 2014 Action Plan;
- Ratify the Compact with Virginia’s Veterans;
- DVS Operations Briefings – committee chairs and DVS directors;
- Review DVS Strategic Plan.